

Is the vaccine safe?

The hepB vaccine is very safe. The most common side effect is soreness at the place where the shot was given.

Before babies are given the hepB vaccine, their parents should be given a form called Hepatitis B Vaccine, What You Need To Know. This form gives information about the vaccine. Parents are asked to read the form and then talk with the doctor or nurse if they have questions.

Should older children get the hep B vaccine?

All children and teenagers should get the hepB vaccine. Parents can talk to their children's doctor or nurse about getting the vaccine.

Should anyone else get the shots?

People should get the hepB vaccine if they:

- live with someone who has the hepatitis B virus
- have more than one sexual partner
- have a sexually transmitted disease
- are a hemodialysis patient
- get blood products
- have liver disease
- come into contact with blood at their jobs
- inject drugs

More information

For more information, call your child's doctor, local health department, or the Michigan Department of Community Health Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program at 517-335-8122 or 800-964-4487. In southeast Michigan, call 313-456-4431 or 313-456-4432.

Websites

Michigan Department of Community Health
www.michigan.gov/hepatitisb

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

Immunization Action Coalition
www.immunize.org

Hepatitis B Information and Support List
www.hblist.org

**PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN TODAY
BY HAVING THEM GET THEIR
HEPATITIS B SHOTS!**

*Michigan Department
of Community Health*

MDCH

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HEPATITIS B:

What Parents Need to Know

 With special information
for pregnant women



What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by a virus that infects the liver. People often show no signs of having the virus. Most people who get the virus get better in a few months, but some carry the virus in their blood all their lives (they are called carriers). In the United States, about 51,000 people get hepatitis B every year, and about one million people are carriers.

♥ **Babies can get hepatitis B at birth if their mother has the hepatitis B virus.**

♥ **Babies and young children may also get hepatitis B if they come into contact with blood or body fluids from their mother or from people they live with who have hepatitis B. The younger you are when you get hepatitis B, the more likely you will become a carrier of the disease.**

How do you get hepatitis B?

You can get it:

- ♥ **at birth, if your mother has the virus**
 - by having sex or sharing needles with someone who has the virus
 - by sharing personal things like razors and toothbrushes with a person who has the virus

One out of three people with the hepatitis B virus does not know how he or she got it.

How do you know if you have hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B can make you feel tired or sick and can sometimes make your skin and eyes yellow.

Many people don't know they have hepatitis B, because they don't feel or look sick. Even if you don't look or feel sick, you can still get liver disease and give hepatitis B to others.

The only way to know if you have hepatitis B is to get a blood test.

♥ **Women should be tested for hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) during EACH pregnancy to see if they have the hepatitis B virus.**

How can babies be safe from getting hepatitis B?

♥ **If a test shows that a pregnant woman has the hepatitis B virus in her blood, her baby can get this virus at birth. Babies born to women who have the hepatitis B virus need:**

- hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) and hepatitis B (hepB) vaccine **WITHIN TWELVE HOURS OF BIRTH**
- a second shot of hepB vaccine at one to two months of age
- a third shot at six months of age
- a blood test three to nine months after the last shot to make sure that they are safe from getting the hepatitis B virus

Babies born to women who do NOT have the hepatitis B virus should also get the hepB vaccine:

- starting at birth
- at one to two months of age
- on or after six months of age

